

PURSER

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Volume 2:

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Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Nua Bioenergy Limited (hereafter referred to as ‘the Applicant’) is proposing to develop biomethane and bio-based fertiliser production facility, with an annual intake of up to 98,000 tonnes of feedstock per annum at a site of c. 5.5 hectares at lands located at the former Lisheen Mine Site, Killoran, Moyne, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. (hereafter referred to as the proposed development).

The Applicant has submitted an application for approval to Tipperary County Council under section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the “Planning Act”) to carry out the proposed development.

Purser has been appointed by the Applicant, to prepare the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

This EIAR is a “*statement of the effects, if any, which the proposed development, if carried out, would have on the environment*” (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, 2022). This EIAR details the consideration of alternatives, consideration and assessment of likely significant effects, mitigation and monitoring measures to reduce significant adverse effects and assessment of residual effects. It has been prepared in compliance with Council Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive).

This EIAR supports the planning application to Tipperary County Council for the proposed development, which if granted, will enable the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed development as described herein.

This chapter provides an outline of the proposed development, information on the Applicant and summarises the consultations which have been carried out by the Applicant to date. In addition, information on the competent experts who prepared the EIAR is included in **Appendix 1.1** of Volume 3 of the EIAR.

The approach to EIAR preparation, structure, methodology is presented in Volume 2, Chapter 2: EIA and Methodology for the preparation of an EIAR (hereafter referred to as EIA and Methodology for the preparation of an EIAR chapter).

1.2 Profile of the Applicant

Nua Bioenergy is committed to producing carbon-negative biofuel and renewable energy from agricultural feedstocks, using advanced anaerobic digestion and upgrading technologies. With over 100 years of combined experience in agriculture, food, and bioenergy, the team at Nua Bioenergy is well-equipped to drive impactful, sustainable energy projects.

The project at Lisheen, Co. Tipperary, has the potential to be one of Ireland's largest biomethane production facilities. By converting agricultural resources into renewable energy, the development not only aligns with national energy goals but also supports the decarbonisation of Ireland's agricultural sector and advances the circular economy. Through this and similar initiatives, Nua Bioenergy plays an essential role in Ireland's transition to a sustainable and resilient energy future.

1.3 Overview of the Proposed Development

Nua Bioenergy Limited intends to apply for permission to develop a biomethane and bio-based fertiliser production facility, designed to process up to 98,000 tonnes of feedstock annually, on a 5.5-hectare site at the former Lisheen Mine, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The site is bordered primarily by former mine lands on three sides and agricultural lands to the west.

The facility will feature a robust anaerobic digestion plant, including four primary and three secondary digester tanks, a set of feed hoppers, technical rooms, biogas conditioning units, and various process, storage, and buffer tanks. Feedstock storage will be provided through three storage clamps and two storage sheds, while biomethane will be upgraded and compressed onsite for distribution. The project will include a biomass boiler with a pellet storage silo, a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plant with an associated heat exchanger, and a dedicated single-storey fertiliser processing and storage unit.

Supporting infrastructure includes a single-storey office building housing administration and welfare facilities, nine car parking spaces, EV charging infrastructure, bicycle parking, two weighbridges, a vehicle wash area, a fuel storage tank, an emergency flare, and site drainage with sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). Additional site elements include a process area runoff lagoon, attenuation pond, boundary fencing, site lighting, hard and soft landscaping, and associated utility connections and site development works.

An Industrial Emissions (IE) licence for operation will be sought from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The proposed development will be classified as a Lower Tier COMAH establishment and therefore, falls under the requirements of the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations, 2015 (COMAH Regulations 2015).

A more detailed description of the proposed development is provided by the Statutory Notices and **Volume2: Chapter 6** (Description of the Proposed Development) of this EIAR.

1.4 Structure of the EIAR

Section 2.6 of Chapter 2 sets out the structure of the EIAR and is repeated below for the benefit of the reader.

This EIAR has been prepared in 3 volumes as follows:

Volume 1 contains the non-technical summary which summarises the findings and conclusions of the EIAR in a clear, understandable manner in non-technical language with relevant figures. The non-technical summary is presented with an overview of the proposed development, the existing environment and any likely significant effects, mitigation measures and relevant aspects of the EIAR in a way which can be easily understood.

Volume 2 contains the main body of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), the main body provides a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the proposed development, structured into chapters that cover each environmental topic in depth. Table 1.1 below sets out the Chapters forming Volume 2 and the Consultant responsible for their preparation.

Chapter	Title	Author
1	Introduction	Purser
2	EIA Process and Methodology	Purser
3	Site Location and Context	Purser
4	Legal and Policy Framework	Purser
5	Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives	Purser
6	Description of the Proposed Development	Purser
7	Population and Human Health	Purser
8	Biodiversity	Veon Ecology
9	Land, Soils and Geology	Enviroguide
10	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Enviroguide
11	Air Quality (including Odour)	AWN
12	Climate	AWN
13	Noise and Vibration	Wave Dynamics
14	Traffic and Transportation	Systra
15	Material Assets: Waste	Enviroguide
16	Material Assets: Utilities	DOBA
17	Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	IAC
18	Landscape and Visual	Purser
19	Major Accidents and Disasters	AWN
20	Inter-Related Effects	Purser
21	Cumulative Impacts	Purser
22	Schedule of Mitigation and Monitoring Proposals	Purser

Table: 1.1: EIAR Volume 2 – Main Body - Structure and Consultants Responsible. (Source: Purser)

- **Volume 3 – Appendices:** contains all relevant surveys, reports, analysis undertaken in association with the specialist Chapters contained in Volume 2.

1.5 Details of Competent Experts

This EIAR has been compiled on behalf of the Applicant by a multi-disciplinary consultancy team of competent experts led by Purser with input from specialist sub-consultants. All technical leads are qualified and competent experts in their fields in accordance with Article 5(3) of the EIA Directive because of their academic qualifications, professional affiliations, and professional experience on other EIARs for major infrastructure projects. Details of the competent experts are provided in **Appendix 1.1** of Volume 3 of the EIAR.

1.6 Consultation Undertaken

Extensive consultation and engagement have been undertaken with a range of stakeholders during the development of the EIAR and statutory consent application in order to:

- Provide information on the proposed development.
- Ascertain and understand the views of stakeholders; and
- Seek input from stakeholders on the design, construction and operation assessment aspects of the proposed development.

In addition to two (2 No.) s. 247 pre-application meetings with Tipperary County Council on the 18 June 2024 and 13 September 2024, respectively, consultation has also been undertaken with relevant local stakeholders, organisations and statutory bodies. A summary of consultation and engagement on the Proposed Development is presented below:

Galmoy Mines Limited: The subject site is in the freehold ownership of Galmoy Mines Limited. A letter of consent for the making of the application by Nua Bioenergy Limited, dated 29 July 2024, accompanies this application. The Applicant engaged with the Landowner throughout the process of preparing the planning application and the EIAR.

Tipperary County Council: In addition to pre-application discussions, the Applicant engaged with Tipperary County Council in relation to an unregistered wayleave located at the Application site with the purpose of providing an outfall drain. A Letter of Consent accompanies this application.

Department of Agriculture: The Applicant liaised with the Department of Agriculture – Veterinary Section in April 2024 and May 2024 in relation to the storage, processes and operation of the proposed facility and the overall site layout. The feedback received at these meetings informed the finalised design of the facility. Importantly, the proposed development has received first stage approval from the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM).

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Irish Bioeconomy Foundation: The Applicant has engaged over several months with the Irish Bioeconomy Foundation including a meeting with Biorbic, the National Bioeconomy Research Centre and with the Biomethane Development Office team in preparation for the planning application.

Gas Utility Providers: The Applicant has engaged with Gas Networks Ireland in relation to the offtake of renewable energy from the proposed development. We refer to the accompanying letter from Gas Networks Ireland dated 25 September 2024 for more information in relation to their expression of interest in the proposed development.

The Applicant has also engaged with Flogas in relation to the offtake of renewable energy from the proposed development. We refer to the accompanying letter from Flogas Enterprise Solutions Limited dated 23 October 2024 for more information in relation to their expression of interest in the proposed development.

ESB Networks: The Applicant has engaged with ESB Networks (ESBN) regarding the presence of overhead lines and the power supply to the proposed development. Undergrounding of the 10kV line from the existing substation to the proposed substation will be facilitated as part of the proposed development. The 110kV overhead line will remain in-situ. Adequate separation distances have been achieved between the line and proposed buildings, as confirmed and agreed with ESBN. ESBN has confirmed adequate capacity to serve the development.

Moyne Group Water Scheme: Private water supply to the site is served by the Moyne Group Water Scheme. The Applicant has engaged with the group, in the preparation of this application. A letter of consent/support dated 6 August 2024, accompanies this application.

The Group Water Scheme will provide potable water to the proposed office and administrative building only. No engagement was required with Uisce Éireann given that water supply for process water and firefighting purposes will be generated by rainwater harvesting and storing of same on site.

1.7 Availability of EIAR

A copy of this EIAR document (i.e. Volumes 1 – 3) is available for purchase at the offices of Tipperary County Council (being the ‘Competent Authority’) at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of reproducing the document during normal business hours at the following address:

- Tipperary County Council, Planning Department, Civic Offices, Clonmel | Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.
- Tipperary County Council Planning Department Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am-1.00pm & 2.00pm - 4.30pm.

It can also be viewed on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s EIA Portal.

1.8 Impartiality

This EIAR document has been prepared with reference to a standardised methodology which is universally accepted and acknowledged. Experienced environmental specialists have been used throughout the EIA process to ensure the EIAR is robust, impartial and objective.

1.9 Difficulties Experienced during the preparation of the EIAR

No particular difficulties were encountered during the assessment process.

1.10 Errors

While every effort has been made to ensure that the content of this EIAR document is error free and consistent there may be instances in this document where typographical errors and/or minor inconsistencies do occur. These typographical errors and/or minor inconsistencies are unlikely to have any material impact on the overall findings and assessment contained in this EIAR.

1.11 References

- Department of the Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2018) Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Transposition of 2014 EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) in the Land Use Planning and EPA Licensing Systems.
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017) Circular PL 1/2017 – Implementation of Directive 2014/52/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive): Advice on the Administrative Provisions in Advance of Transposition.
- Environmental Protection Agency (2022) Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (May 2022) (EPA Guidelines).
- Environmental Protection Agency (2003) Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements.
- European Commission (2017) Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.